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THE SKY'S the LIMIT

4 ALL-ACTION ISSUES EVERY MONTH

- ★ No. 61 **DEATH TRAP**
Like a monstrous god of war, Hill 60 demanded a sacrifice!
- ★ No. 62 **NIGHT OF THE DEVIL**
The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle!
- ★ No. 63 **CHALLENGE**
The war was too far away for these red-blooded men of action!
- ★ No. 64 **THE VICIOUS CIRCLE**
Clawed from the sky, they would not admit defeat!

BATTLE PICTURE LIBRARY

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The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle!

NIGHT OF THE DEVIL



THE SKY'S THE LIMIT



BURMA, 1942. THE JAPS WERE TRYING TO WIN THE BATTLE FOR THE EASTERN SKIES WITH THEIR DEADLY ZERO FIGHTERS. MATCHED AGAINST THEM WAS A SORELTY DEPLETED FIGHTING FORCE OF HURRICANE PLEDGED TO STEM THE ENEMY MIGHT...

Chapter 1. The Flying Tigers

ON THE BATTERED AIRFIELD OF MINGALA, ENEMY BOMBERS ONCE MORE AIMED A VICIOUS ATTACK, SWEEPING IN AT LOW LEVEL TO HAMMER THE STRICKEN AIRSTRIP IN OPEN DAYLIGHT...

THERE'S ONE THAT WON'T GET BACK TO TOJO! KEEP IT UP, LADY!



THE WEEKS OF CONTINUAL ACTION WERE TELLING ON THE EXHAUSTED PILOTS WHO LIMPED HOME TO BASE IN A SHELTER BY THE AIRSTRIP. WING COMMANDER BRYANT D.F.C. SPOKE TO THE SOLE REMAINING STATION OFFICER...

ALL OUR ACK-ACK SITES WERE KNOCKED OUT IN THAT LAST RAID, DOG. WE CAN'T LAST MUCH LONGER!

CHEER UP, OLD MAN, SURELY THIS IS WHAT YOU CAME OUT TO BURMA FOR— TO GIVE THE JAPS SOME OF THEIR OWN MEDICINE?



WING COMMANDER BRYANT TURNED AWAY AT THE WORDS. HIS THOUGHTS ROLLED BACK TO A SIMILAR NIGHT, TWO YEARS BEFORE— WHEN THE ENEMY HAD NOT BEEN A SNARLING ZERO FIGHTER...

I'LL NEVER FORGET WHY I APPLIED FOR THIS POSTING...



The Sky's The Limit

TWO YEARS BEFORE, FLIGHT LIEUTENANT BRYANT HAD BEEN A NIGHT-FIGHTER PILOT, FLYING BEAUFIGHTERS FROM AN AIRFIELD IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND...



THE BEAUFIGHTER HEADED FOR BASE AGAIN AS JOHNNY LEVIS, BRYANT'S GUNNER, CONGRATULATED HIM. THE MOMENT THEY TOUCHED DOWN, BRYANT WAS CALLED TO SEE THE STATION COMMANDER...

WE WANT YOU TO TAKE OVER A NEW FIGHTER, BRYANT. IT'S A BIT HUSH-HUSH AT PRESENT - BUT YOU ARE JUST THE MAN FOR THE JOB...

IS IT THE NEW JAGUAR STREAK? I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT IT...

DESPITE BRYANT'S ENTHUSIASM OVER THE NEW FIGHTER, THE STATION COMMANDER LOOKED A LITTLE GRIM. BRYANT WAS TO REMEMBER HIS WORDS MUCH LATER...

DISCOUNT ANY RUMOURS YOU'VE HEARD, BRYANT. THE NEW STREAK IS AN ENTIRELY UNKNOWN QUANTITY. WHOEVER FLIES HER FIRST WILL BE TAKING A GOOD DEAL MORE THAN HIS OWN LIFE IN HIS HANDS...

I UNDERSTAND, SIR. WHEN DO I START?



The Sky's The Limit

THE WHEELS TURNED FAST AFTER THAT FIRST INTERVIEW. IT WAS AT A SMALL, SECRET AIRSTRIP THAT PETER BRYANT AND JOHNNY LEVIS FIRST TOOK OVER THE PROTOTYPE FIGHTER...

SHE LOOKS A BEAUTY, SKIPPER!

THE DESIGN'S FIVE YEARS AHEAD OF ITS TIME, SO THEY SAY.



BUT DESPITE HIS FRETENCE OF CONFIDENCE, BRYANT FELT JITTERY ABOUT THE TEST FLIGHTS. THE RUMOURS HE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE NEW PLANE - THAT IT WAS UNSTABLE, UNRELIABLE IN AN EMERGENCY - HAUNTED HIM AS THEY CLIMBED TOWARDS THE STARS THAT EVENING ...

WHAT'S SHE HANDLING LIKE, SKIPPER?

I~I'M NOT SURE YET... A BIT HEAVY I'D SAY... BUT SHE'LL PROBABLY IMPROVE WITH PRACTICE.



SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A CRACKLE IN BRYANT'S EARPHONES...

GLAZER TWO FOUR.
BANDIT APPROACHING.
ANGELS ELEVEN.
AVOID CONTACT.

ROGER,
BOFFIN.

THE NEWS OF THE PROWLING ENEMY PLANE BROUGHT A DULL SENSE OF UNEASIE TO BRYANT...

I'LL CLIMB TO FIFTEEN THOUSAND FEET...WE'D BETTER HAVE A BIT OF HEIGHT IN HAND...

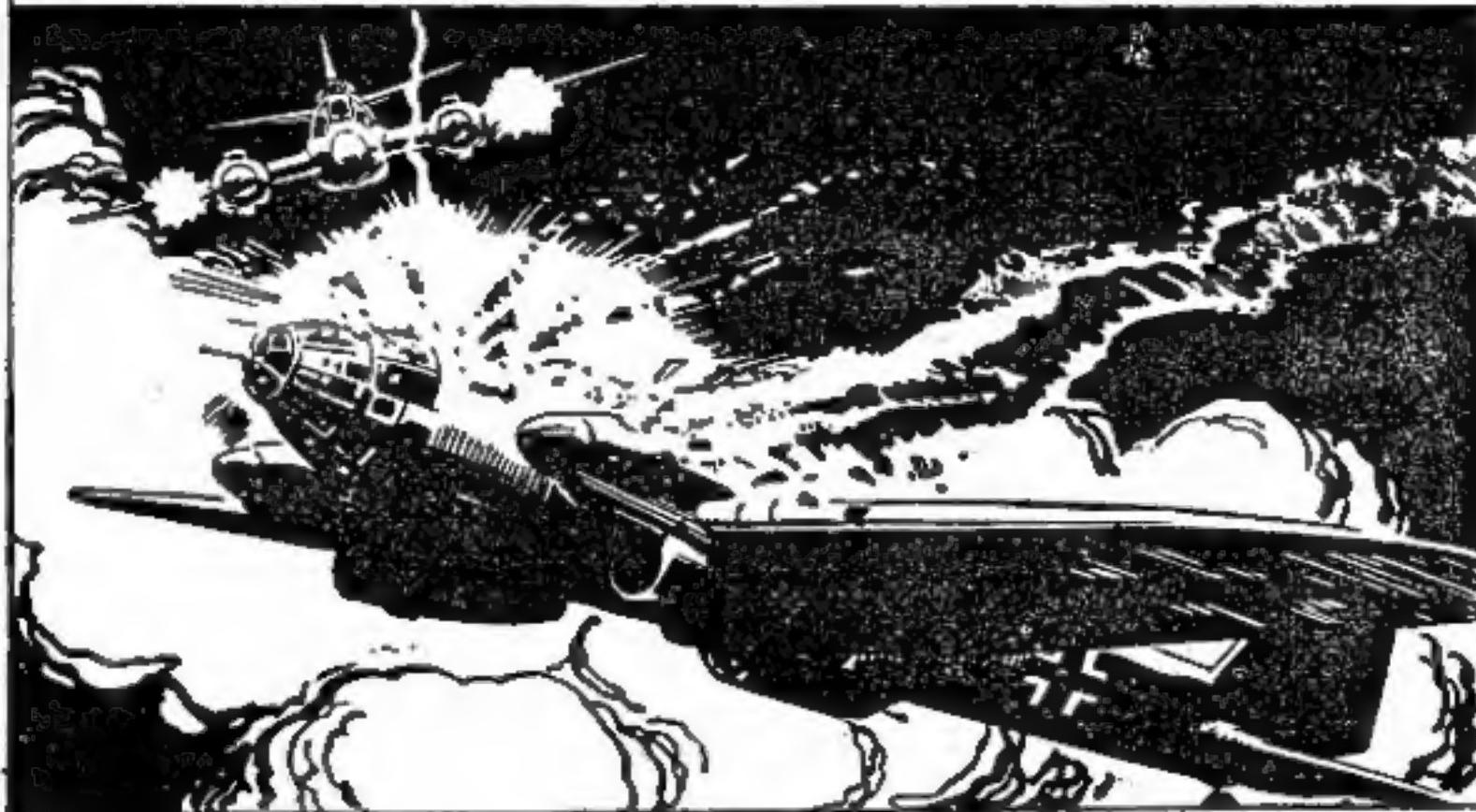
THERE'S THE BANDIT, SKIPPER - AND HE'D BE A SITTING TARGET! LET'S HAVE A CRACK AT HIM!

The Sky's The Limit

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BRYANT WAS JERKED INTO ACTION. THE NEW FIGHTER RESPONDED EAGERLY TO HIS HANDLING AS HE FLUNG IT TOWARDS THE GERMAN BOMBER ...



...AND NEXT INSTANT, THE FLASHING GUNS OF THE BRITISH PLANE RIPPED THE NIGHT APART WITH THUNDER. THE HEINKEL BLEW UP IN A SHOWER OF ALUMINIUM DEBRIS AND FLAMES!



The Sky's The Limit

FOR JOHNNY LEWIS IT WAS ANOTHER MOMENT OF TRIUMPH—ANOTHER ONE FOR THE SCORE. BUT AS HE STARTED TO SPEAK, BRYANT GAVE A SHOUT OF ALARM...

PRESSURE LINE'S BURST,
SKIPPER! SWITCH TO AUXILIARY!

THE CONTROLS ARE JAMMED! I CAN'T PULL OUT OF THE DIVE!



THE FEW SECONDS THAT FOLLOWED WERE A NIGHTMARE. ONE MOMENT HE WAS REACHING FOR THE PRESSURE LINE CONTROL. NEXT MOMENT HE WAS PLUNGING THROUGH THE COLD, DARK NIGHT, HIS PARACHUTE BLOSSOMING ABOVE HIM.

JOHNNY'S STILL TRAPPED IN THERE! WHAT HAPPENED?



The Sky's The Limit

IT WAS MUCH LATER WHEN BRYANT REALISED WHAT HAD GONE WRONG. HIS NUMBERED FINGERS HAD BLUNDERED... AND HE HAD PRESSED THE EJECTION SEAT CONTROL. BUT THE INQUIRY HAD RELIEVED HIM OF RESPONSIBILITY...

WE FIND THAT FLIGHT LIEUTENANT BRYANT ACTED IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE SERVICE IN ATTACKING THE ENEMY PLANE. IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT HIS OWN AIRCRAFT WAS SHOT DOWN IN WITH THE LOSS OF ONE MAN...

SHOT DOWN? THEY DON'T KNOW IT WAS MY FAULT. THE PLANE CRASHED - AND KILLED POOR JOHNNY...



THE WRECKAGE OF THE NEW FIGHTER HAD BEEN SO SHATTERED THAT THE EXPERTS HAD NEVER FOUND THE REAL REASON FOR THE CRASH. BRYANT HAD ASKED FOR A POSTING TO THE FAR EAST TO GET AWAY FROM THE MEMORIES OF THAT FATEFUL MISSION...

YOU'RE NOT LOOKING TOO WELL, OLD CHAP. NEED A CHECK-UP?

I'M OKAY, DOC - IT'S JUST THE HEAT...

I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT NIGHT - AND JOHNNY'S FACE

BRYANT STALKED OUT OF THE DUG-OUT TO WATCH THE HURRICANES COME IN TO LAND ON THE BATTERED AIRSTRIP...

IT'S TAKING US ALL OUR TIME TO HOLD OUT HERE... NO REPLACEMENTS, LACK OF FUEL...



The Sky's The Limit

THAT NIGHT, THREE MORE PLANES LANDED AT MINGALA AIRSTRIP. THREE UNEXPECTED PLANES... BATTERED AMERICAN P40 FIGHTERS...

VISITORS,
SIE! YANKEE
KITES BY
THE LOOK
OF 'EM!

AMERICAN
PLANES

THE FLIGHTS OF THE THREE PLANES WERE SOON STANDING BEFORE WING COMMANDER BRYANT

MY NAME'S HAMES
MY FRIENDS HERE
ARE LIEUTENANT
RAWSON AND
LIEUTENANT
HOLT.

THIS IS AN
R&B STATION, HAMES!
LUCKY MY FIGHTERS
WEREN'T IN THE AIR - YOU
MIGHT HAVE BEEN
MISTAKEN FOR ZEROES!
BUT WHAT ARE
YOU DOING HERE?



The Sky's The Limit

HAMES EXPLAINED - AND BRYANT
BEGAN TO EYE HIM COLDLY...

OUR THREE
PLANES ARE
ALL THAT'S LEFT
OF A FLYING TIGER
SQUADRON!

FLYING
TIGERS! I'VE
HEARD ABOUT
YOU. YOU'RE
MERCENARIES
HIRED
FIGHTERS!

HAMES' WORDS BROUGHT EVERYTHING
INTO SHARP FOCUS THE FLYING TIGERS
WERE A GROUP OF PILOTS, FORMED
BY THE CHINESE TO CHECK JAP AIR
ATTACKS ON THEIR SOIL...

YOU HAD NO AUTHORITY
TO LAND HERE I SHALL
HAVE TO IMPOUND YOUR
PLANES AND HOLD YOU
PENDING ORDERS

WE HAD
NO CHOICE!
WE NEED
TO FLY TO
RANGOON!

SURE / IT WAS
TOUGH WORK
WE WERE
DOING BUT
IT PAID WELL
NOW WE
WANT A
CHANCE TO
SPEND THE
MONEY!



THE WORDS OF THE
AMERICAN BROUGHT OUT THE
BRISTLING ANGER IN BRYANT.

I'M CERTAINLY
NOT GIVING YOU
PETROL FROM OUR
SMALL SUPPLY TO
GET YOU TO RANGOON
WITH YOUR BLOOD
MONEY!

YOU
MEAN
WE'RE STUCK
HERE? YOU
CAN'T DO
THAT TO
US!



The Sky's The Limit

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THE THREE FLYING TIGERS LOUNGED INSOLENTLY THROUGH THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED. FINALLY...

IS THIS ALL YOU HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR TIME? MY PILOTS ARE TIRED OUT FROM KEEPING THIS AIRFIELD INTACT! AND YOU PLAY CARDS!

YOU CAN SOON GET RID OF US BY FUELLED OUR PLANES, BRYANT!



THE PRESENCE OF THE THREE MEN BEGAN TO MAKE ITSELF FELT, UNDERMINING THE MORALE OF THE RAF FLYERS

BEATS ME WHY THE OLD MAN ALLOWS THOSE THREE SHIRKERS TO HANG ON HERE

THOSE YANKEE PLANES ARE IN GOOD SHAPE. THEY COULD HELP US... IF THEIR PILOTS WEREN'T TOO SCARED.



The Sky's The Limit

THAT NIGHT, VINCENT HAMES CAME TO SEE BRYANT HE PUT HIS CARDS ON THE TABLE .

LOOK WING COMMANDER- THIS WAR ISN'T GOING TO LAST FOR EVER I CAN MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO FUEL ONE OF THOSE PLANES

YOU FOOL HAMES! YOU THINK YOU CAN BRIBE ME ! GET OUT OF HERE-BEFORE I THROW YOU OUT !

THE TWO MEN FACED EACH OTHER ANGRILY. THEN HAMES TURNED AWAY ABRUPTLY.

YOU SNOOTY R.A.F. TYPES MAKE ME SICK! I WAS IN THE R.A.F. ONCE! MAYBE I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY SOMETIME- IF YOU'RE STILL ALIVE TO HEAR IT!

SO THAT'S WHERE HE LEARNED TO FLY



THE BROODING TENSION ON THE AIRFIELD CONTINUED THROUGH THE NEXT DAY. BRYANT FELT IN HIS BONES THAT SOMETHING WAS ABOUT TO BREAK- THEN, AT NIGHTFALL .IT DID!

ONE OF THE TIGERS! AND HE'S TAKING OFF!



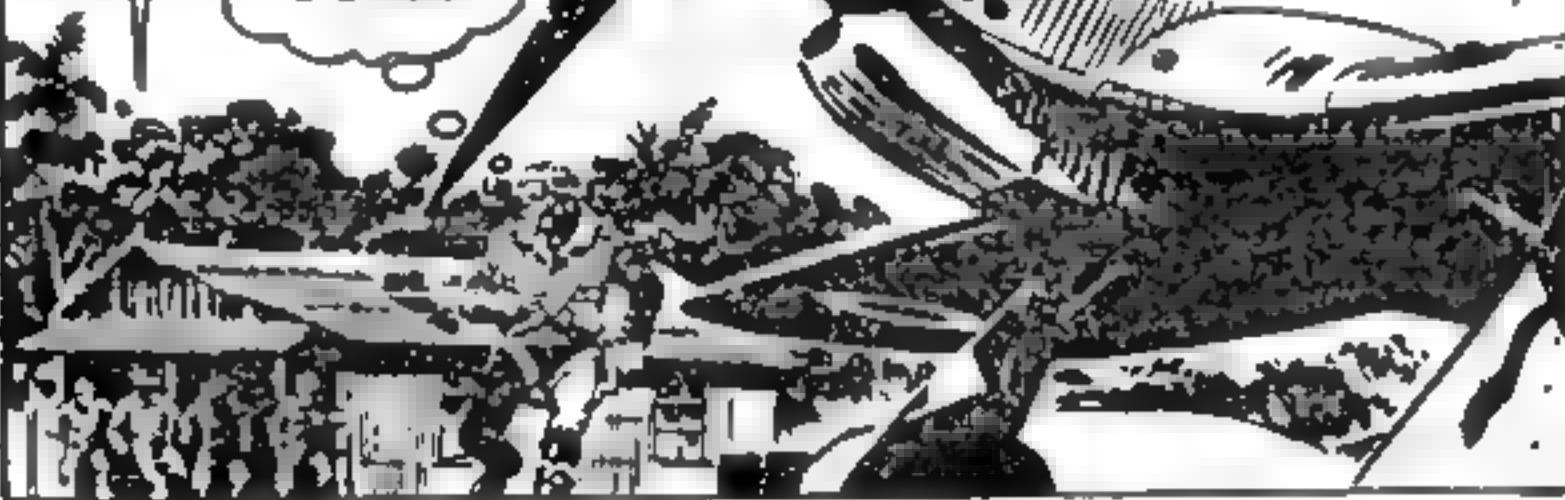
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THE WING COMMANDER RUSHED FOR THE NEAREST HURRICANE, HARDLY STOPPING TO LISTEN TO THE SHOUTS AROUND HIM.

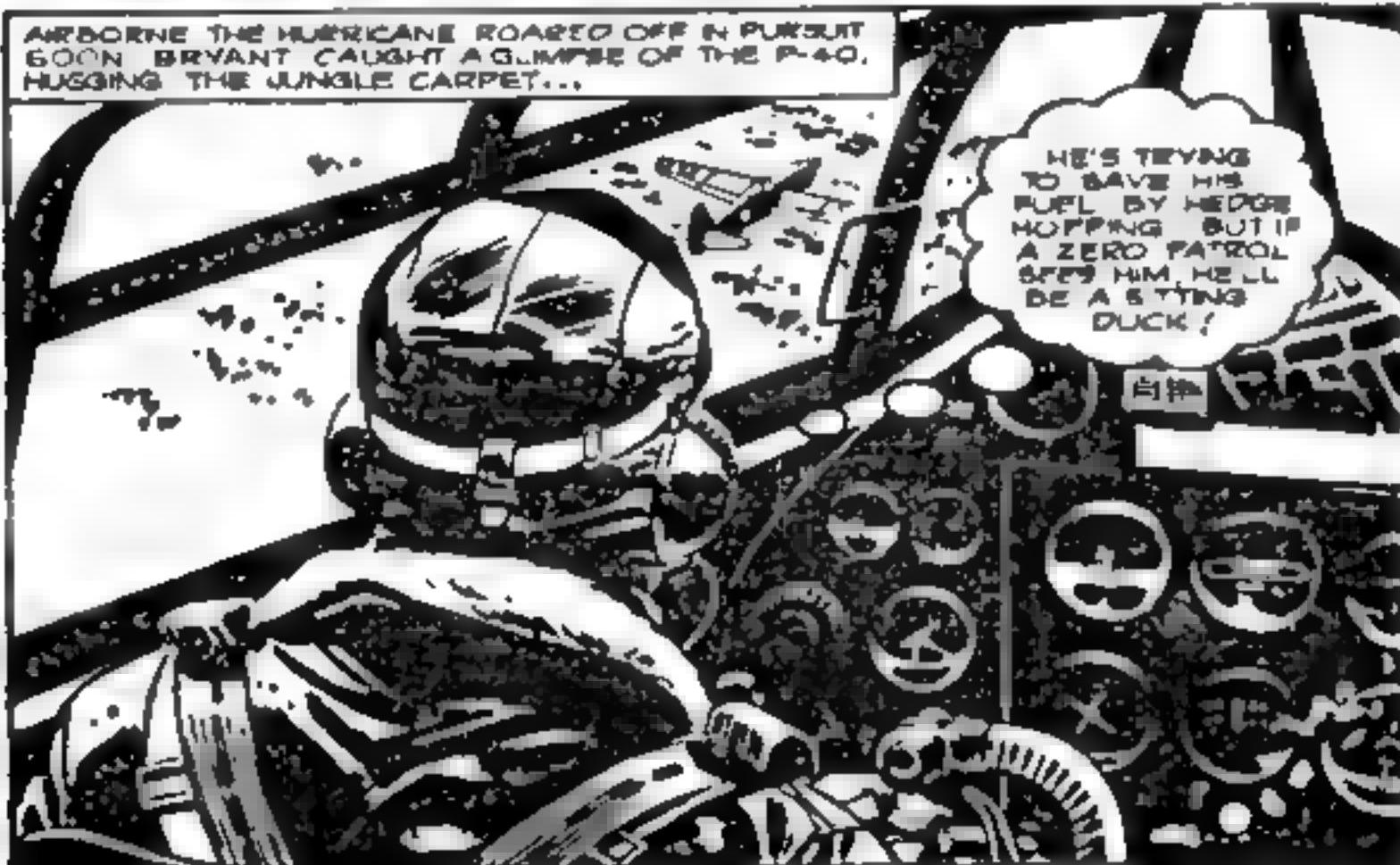
HE MUST HAVE SYPHONED SOME PETROL FROM ONE OF THE TANKS! CRAZY IDIOT - HE'LL NOT HAVE ENOUGH FUEL TO REACH RANGOON...

I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM - FORCE HIM TO LAND.



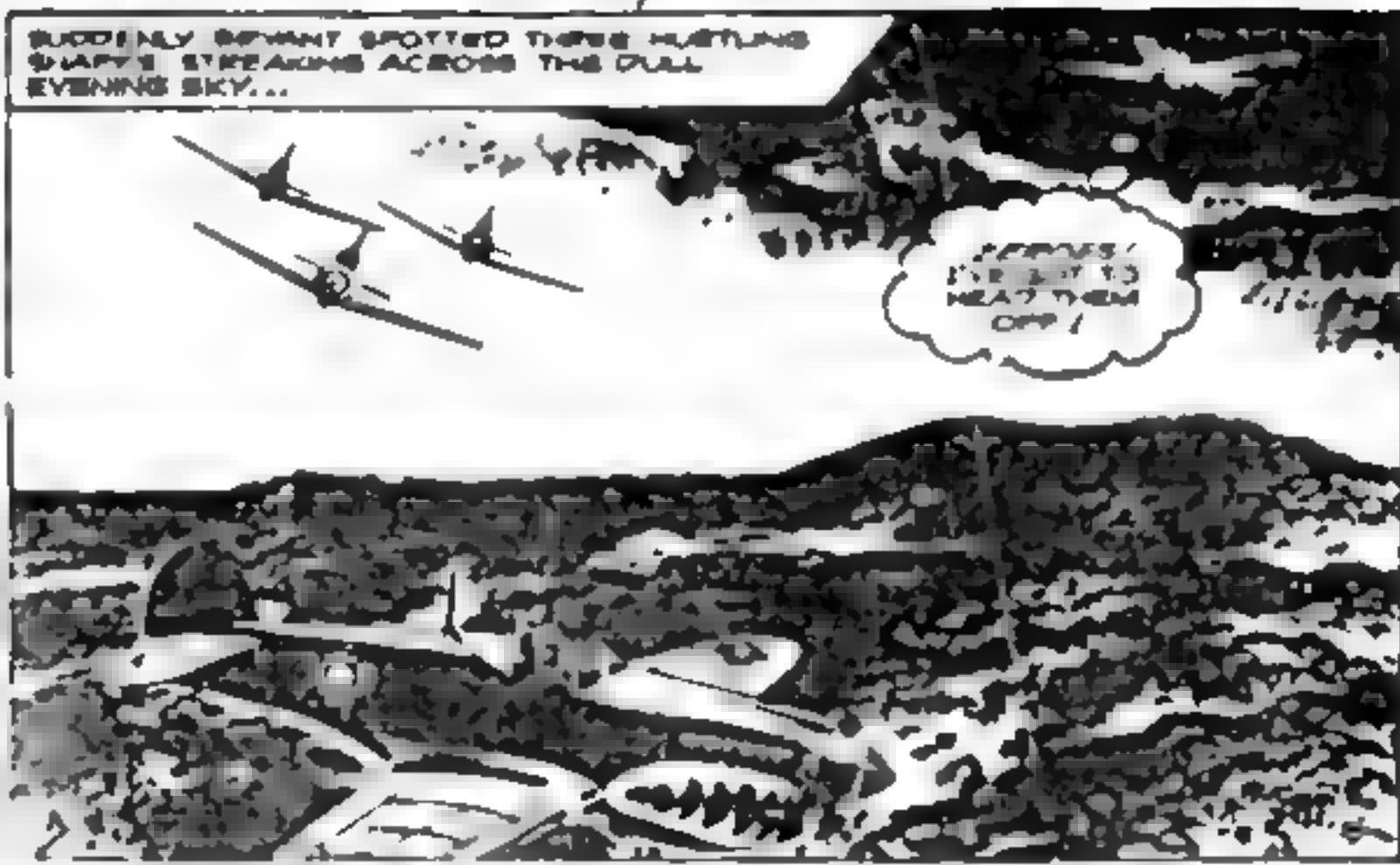
AIRBORNE THE HURRICANE ROARED OFF IN PURSUIT. SOON BRYANT CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF THE P-40, HUGGING THE JUNGLE CARPET...

HE'S TRYING TO SAVE HIS FUEL BY HEDGE HOPPING BUT IF A ZERO PATROL GETS HIM, HE'LL BE A SITTING DUCK!

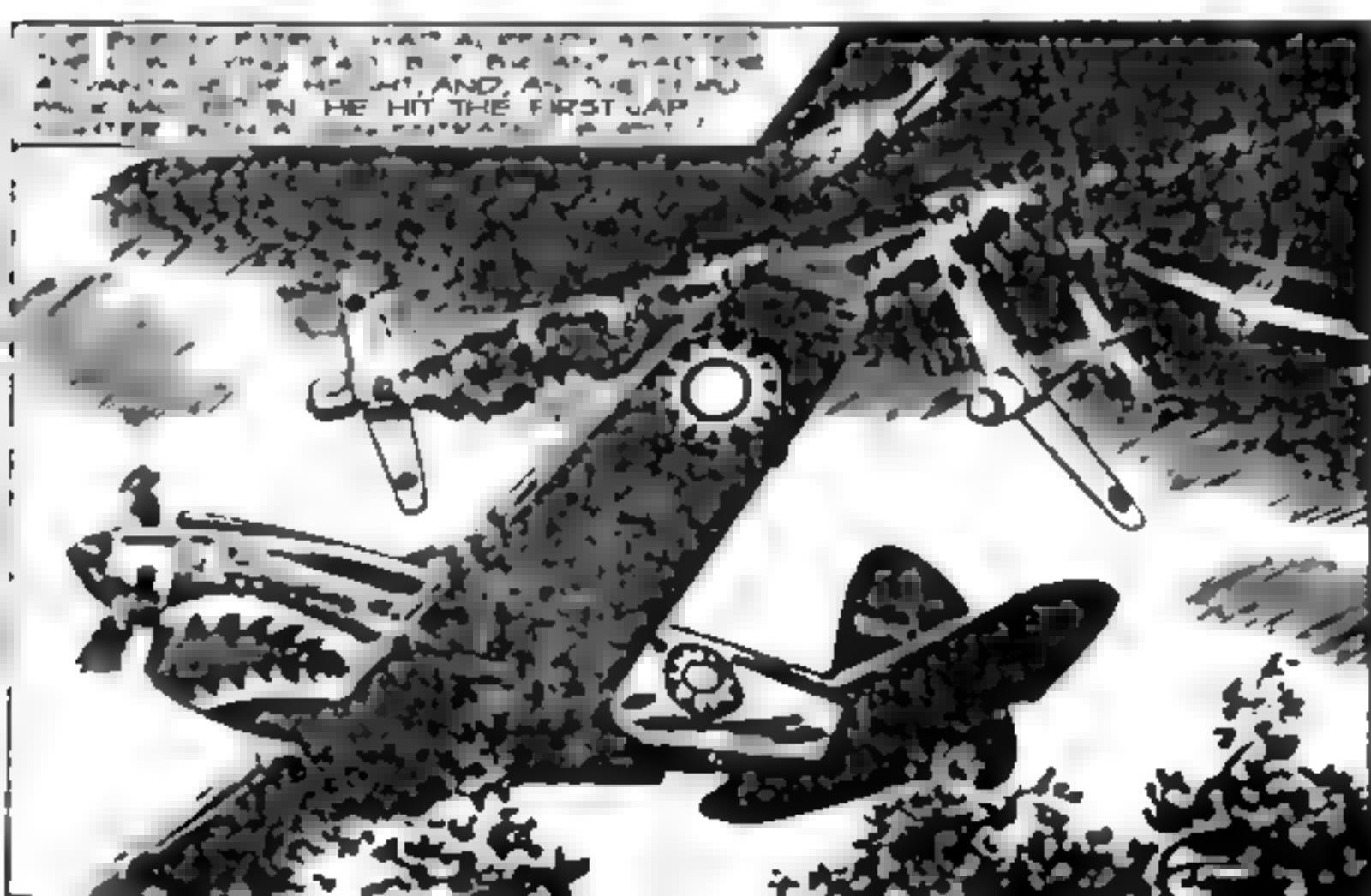


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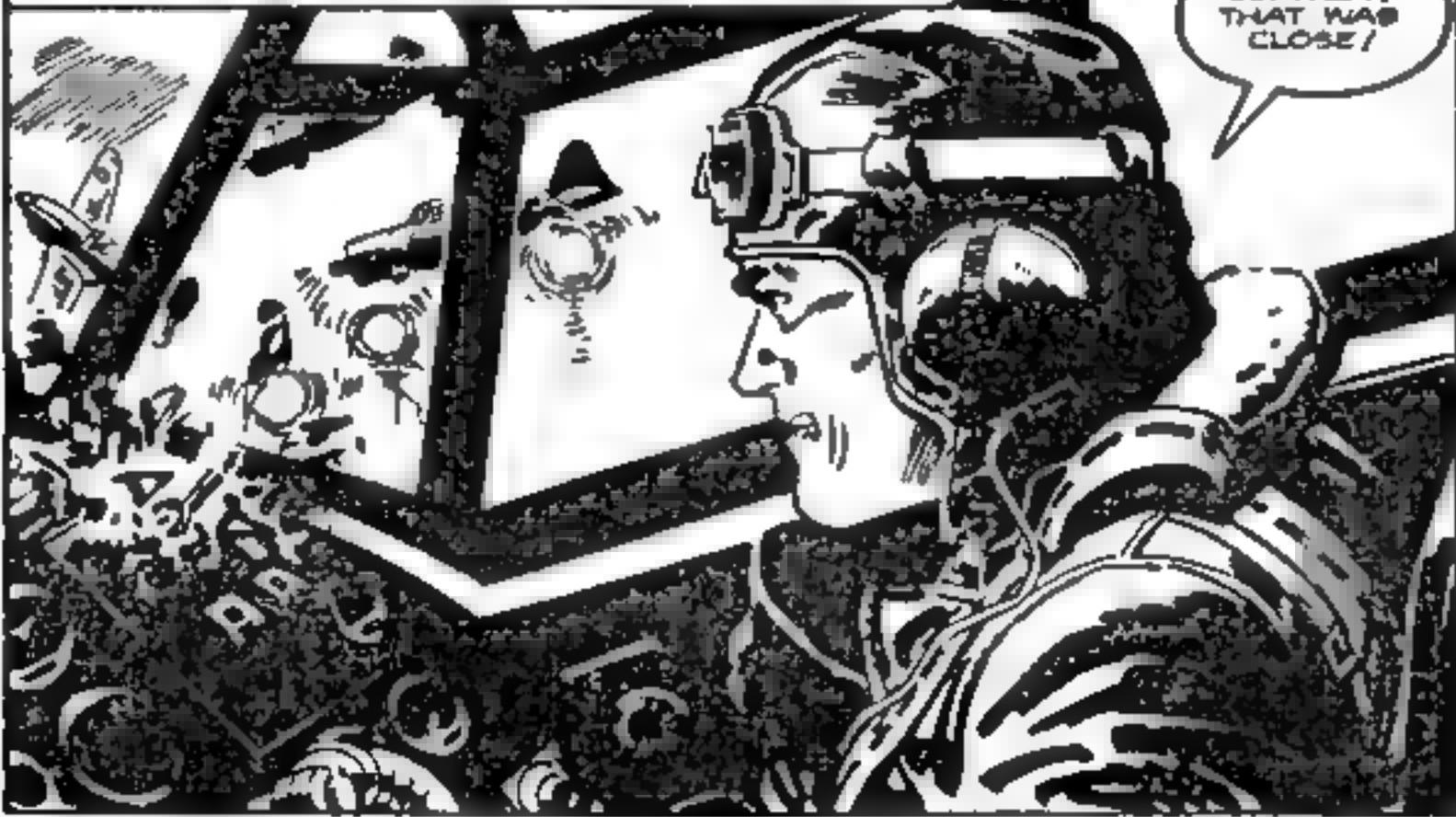
SUDDENLY BOYNTON SPOTTED THREE JAPANESE
SAMPANS STREAMING ACROSS THE DULL
EVENING SKY...



BOYNTON HAD A FEW SECONDS
TO DECIDE WHAT HE COULD DO AND HAD TO
ACT QUICKLY. HE HIT THE JAP
WITH HIS GUN AND DOWN HE HIT THE FIRST JAP.
LATER IN THE AIR, HE DOWNED ANOTHER.



A VICIOUS DOG-FIGHT STARTED ABOVE THE JUNGLE
AND BRYANT FELT THE SUDDEN THUDS AS
BULLETS RAKED THE HURRICANE!



IN THOSE FEW SECONDS OF NUMMING SHOCK, ALL THE OLD FEAR RUSHED BACK INTO BRYANT'S MIND. HE REMEMBERED ANOTHER NIGHT SITTING IN THE COCKPIT OF A PLANE OUT OF CONTROL...



The Sky's The Limit

THE THOUGHT THAT ANOTHER MAN'S LIFE RESTED ON HIS JUDGMENT FORCED BRYANT BACK INTO ACTION AGAIN. HE CLIMBED FAST—AND FOUND THE NEXT ZERO DEAD IN HIS RING OF SIGHT.



BUT THE LAST OF THE ENEMY FIGHTERS HAD LOCKED ON TO THE P-40'S TAIL. THE SKY WAS LICKED WITH CERIMON FIRE AS ITS GUNS SPURTED LETHAL HAMMER BLOWS.



THE P-40 PLUNGED TO THE GROUND, TRAILING A BANNER OF BLACK SMOKE. THE JAP PILOT WAS TOO ENgrossed IN HIS FURY TO SEE THE HURRICANE DIVING DOWN ON HIM - UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE!



THE BATTLE WAS OVER. BRYANT CIRCLED THE RIBBON OF SMOKE WHICH ROSE FROM THE CRASHED P-40, THEN FLEW BACK TO BASE. BUT, IN THE JUNGLE, OTHER EYES HAD SEEN THE CRASH . . .



The Sky's The Limit

AT BASE, BRYANT HEARD URGENT NEWS . . .

THE OTHER TWO TIGER PILOTS HAVE RUN FOR IT, SIR! THEY'VE TAKEN A COUPLE OF RIFLES AND AMMO WITH THEM!

THE FOOLS! IF THEY RUN INTO THE JAPS, THEY'VE HAD IT!



DRYANT CAME TO A QUICK DECISION AS HE SPOKE TO THE MEDICAL OFFICER

THAT YANKEE PILOT MAY HAVE SURVIVED THE CRASH, SIR... YOU CAN'T LEAVE HIM FOR THE JAPS . . .

DON'T WORRY ~ I'M GOING OUT FOR HIM BUT FOR ONE REASON ONLY ~ WE MIGHT TELL THE JAPS SOMETHING THEY WANT TO KNOW!



WITH THE M.O. AND THREE MEN, BRYANT SET OUT. HE REALISED ONLY TOO WELL THE DANGER OF A JAP ATTACK ON THE AIRFIELD, IF THE ENEMY FOUND OUT HOW DEPLETED THE GROUND DEFENCES WERE.

BRYANT'S COLD-BLOODED, BUT HE'S RIGHT, I SUPPOSE WE CAN'T LET THOSE THREE MEN GIVE US AWAY

I'VE GOT TO FIND THOSE THREE IDIOTS - KEEP THEM OUT OF JAP HANDS



The Sky's The Limit

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SUDDENLY, A SHAFT OF CLEAR MORNING LIGHT SHONE
DOWN ON THE RAINING AHEAD OF THEM AND REVEALED
THE JAP PATROL'S POSITION ON TO THE BEACH.

THAT ENEMY
PATROL HAS
RULLED THEM
DOWN THEM!



TAKEN BY SURPRISE IN THEIR MOMENT OF SUCCESS, THE
JAPS HAD LITTLE CHANCE TO PUT UP MUCH RESISTANCE.



The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT FOUND THE MO BANDAGING THE AMERICAN, HOLT...

SO YOU WERE THE PILOT, HOLT... WHERE ARE HAMES AND RAWSON?

HAMES FIGURED THEY STOOD A BETTER CHANCE IN THE JUNGLE

BUT THE JUNGLE'S ALIVE WITH JAP PATROLS! THEY'RE CRAZY!

CRAZY! I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT. WE WERE CRAZY WITH THAT BOUNTY MONEY... BUT MAYBE I'M STARTING TO LEARN SOMETHING.

LEARN SOMETHING, HOLT?

YES I'VE LEARNED YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM THE JAPS ~ OR THE WAR. BUT I GUESS A MAN IS ENTITLED TO ONE MISTAKE IN HIS LIFE

I MADE A MISTAKE TOO... BUT IT KILLED JOHNNY LEVIS!



HE READ THE SIGNAL CAREFULLY AND STOOD, STARING BLEAKLY INTO SPACE AS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MESSAGE DAWNED ON HIM ...



The Sky's The Limit

AT THAT MOMENT, A SAVAGE JAP ASSAULT WAS TAKING PLACE AGAINST THE SCATTERED REMNANTS OF THE BRITISH FORCES TRYING TO WITHDRAW FROM KUMMING, NOT TEN MILES AWAY.

GARRETT!
WE SHALL
DRIVE THEM
BACK TO THE
COAST!

THOSE FLEET
CUT THEM
DOWN!



THE RAGGED ALLIED LINE BROKE UNDER THE TEERVOLE BOMBING, BUT STILL ISOLATED POCKETS OF MEN MADE A GALLANT ATTEMPT TO HOLD OUT.

KEEP IT UP
LADS, WE'RE
NOT LICKED
YET!



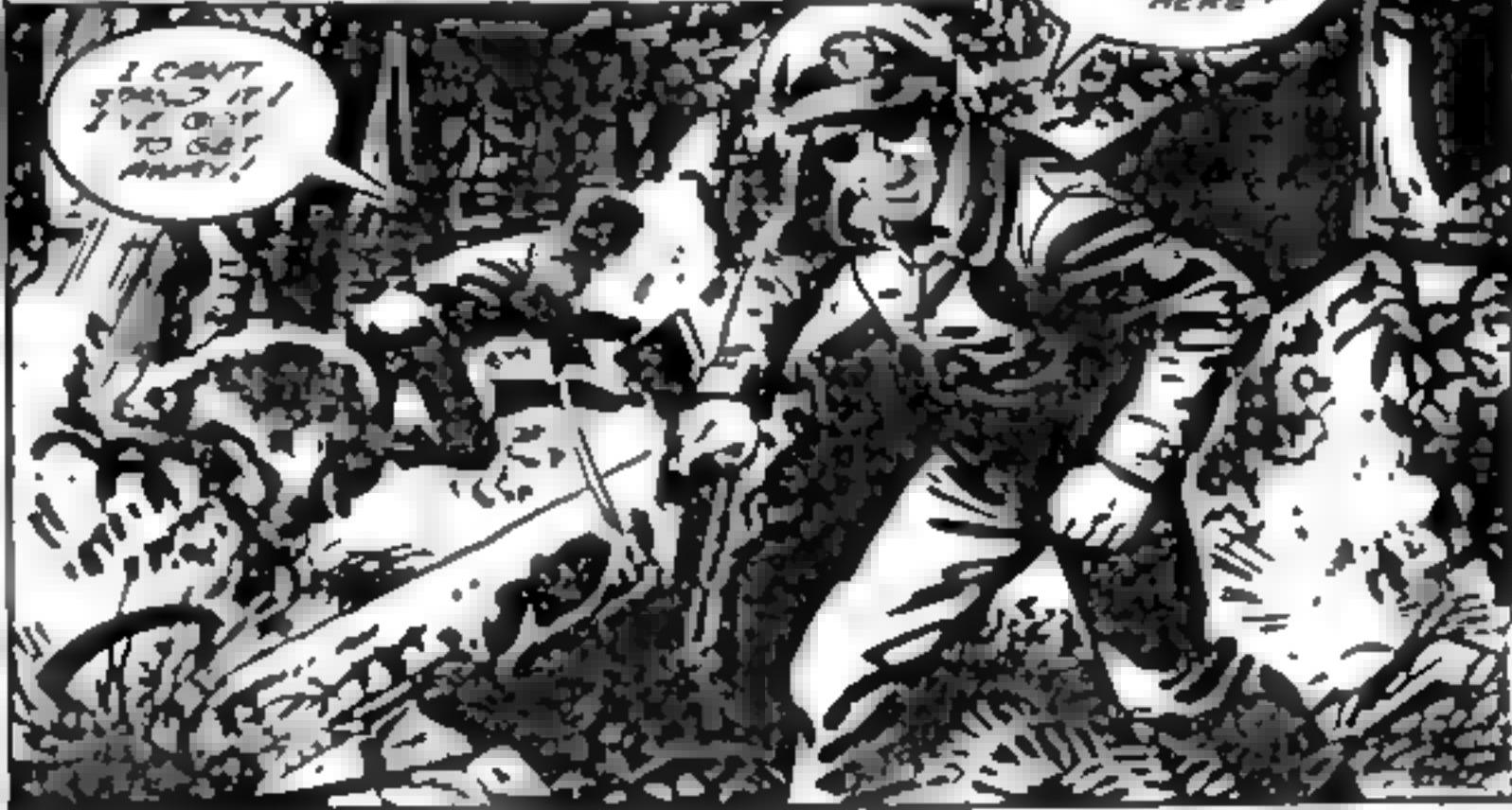
The Sky's The Limit

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TO MOP UP THE LAST TEARS OF RESISTANCE THE JAP ARTILLERY LAD ON A HEAVY BARREL TRAPPED IN THE ONBLAKING OF STEEL TWO DESPERATE KIOTED RIFLED BUNDLY THROUGH THE JUNGLE

PARNON,
DAMN YOU!
COME BACK
HERE!

I CAN'T
SPARE IT!
I'VE GOT
TO GET
AWAY!



PARNON AND HAMES THE EX-FLYING TIGER PILOTS HAD BEEN TRYIN' TO RUN THE GAUNTLET OF JAP PATROLS TO REACH KANGAROO WITH THE THING. A JET AND TWO THIN

AAGH!
MY LEGS!



HANK RAWKIN LAY ON THE GROUND SITTING IN PAN AS THE HOUSING OF THE DARKPADE GRADUALLY LIFTED. IT WAS THERE THAT HAMES FINALLY FOUND HIM

PARNON!
WHERE ARE YOU?

HERE.
HAME'S IN HERE!



The Sky's The Limit

HAMES TOOK ONE LOOK AT THE BOUNDED
MAN AND SLOWLY DROVE TO HIS FEET SLOWLY

YOU'LL NEVER
MAKE IT TO
RANGOON WITH
THAT HOLE IN
YOUR LEG,
RAWSON

YOU CAN'T
LEAVE ME HERE,
HAMES! YOU'VE GOT
TO HELP ME! I'LL
PAY YOU!

THE TWO MEN STARED BALELY AT EACH OTHER BOTH
HAD GAMBLED NOW ONE HAD LOST

WHAT'S YOUR
LIFE WORTH,
RAWSON?

EVERYTHING!
EVERYTHING I'VE
GOT HAMES BUT
GET ME BACK
TO THE
AIRFIELD

THAT
JUST ABOUT
MAKES IT
WORTH MY
WHILE TO GO
BACK RAWSON
BUT ONLY
JUST

HOURS LATER,
THE TWO MEN
STAGGERED ON
TO THE AIRSTRIP
AT MINGALA...

HAMES
AND RAWSON!
THEY'VE COME
BACK!

RAWSON
LOOKS BAD...
WE'LL NEED
ATTENTION.



HAMES REPORTED TO WING COMMANDER BRYANT THE TWO MEN FACED EACH OTHER ONCE MORE STILL AWARE OF THE ENEMY THAT BURNED BETWEEN THEM...

THE JAPS HAVE BROKEN CLEAN THROUGH WHAT'S LEFT OF THE GROUND SUPPORT BRYANT YOU'VE GOT TO LET US FLY OUT WITH WHAT FUEL YOU'VE GOT LEFT...

YOU HAVEN'T COME BACK TO FLY TO SAFETY, HAMES! MINGALA STAYS OPERATIONAL!



The Sky's The Limit

DRYANT WALKED AWAY, HAMES STARING FURIOUSLY AFTER HIM ..

HE HASN'T GOT A CHANCE OF HOLDING OUT! I'VE GOT TO MAKE ANOTHER BREAK FOR IT. I'M NOT GOING TO BE DUMPED OFF BY THE JAPS WITH ALL THE MONEY I'VE GOT!



DRYANT WAS AS GOOD AS HIS WORD. MINGALA REMAINED OPERATIONAL AND, THROUGH THE DAYS AND NIGHTS THAT FOLLOWED, HURRICANES STRAFED THE JAP LINES OF COMMUNICATION ..

THIS'LL SAVE THE ARMY BOYS A LOT OF TROUBLE!



THE AIR STRIKES CONTINUED - BUT THE ENEMY COUNTER-
ATTACK CAME SAVAGELY ONE DUSK, HERALDED BY
THE WHINE OF MITSUBISHI ENGINES...



BRYANT REVVED THE ENGINE OF HIS
HURRICANE. THE ODDS AGAINST THEM
SEEMED HOPELESS... AND A SUDDEN
FEELING OF DESPAIR SEIZED HIM ...

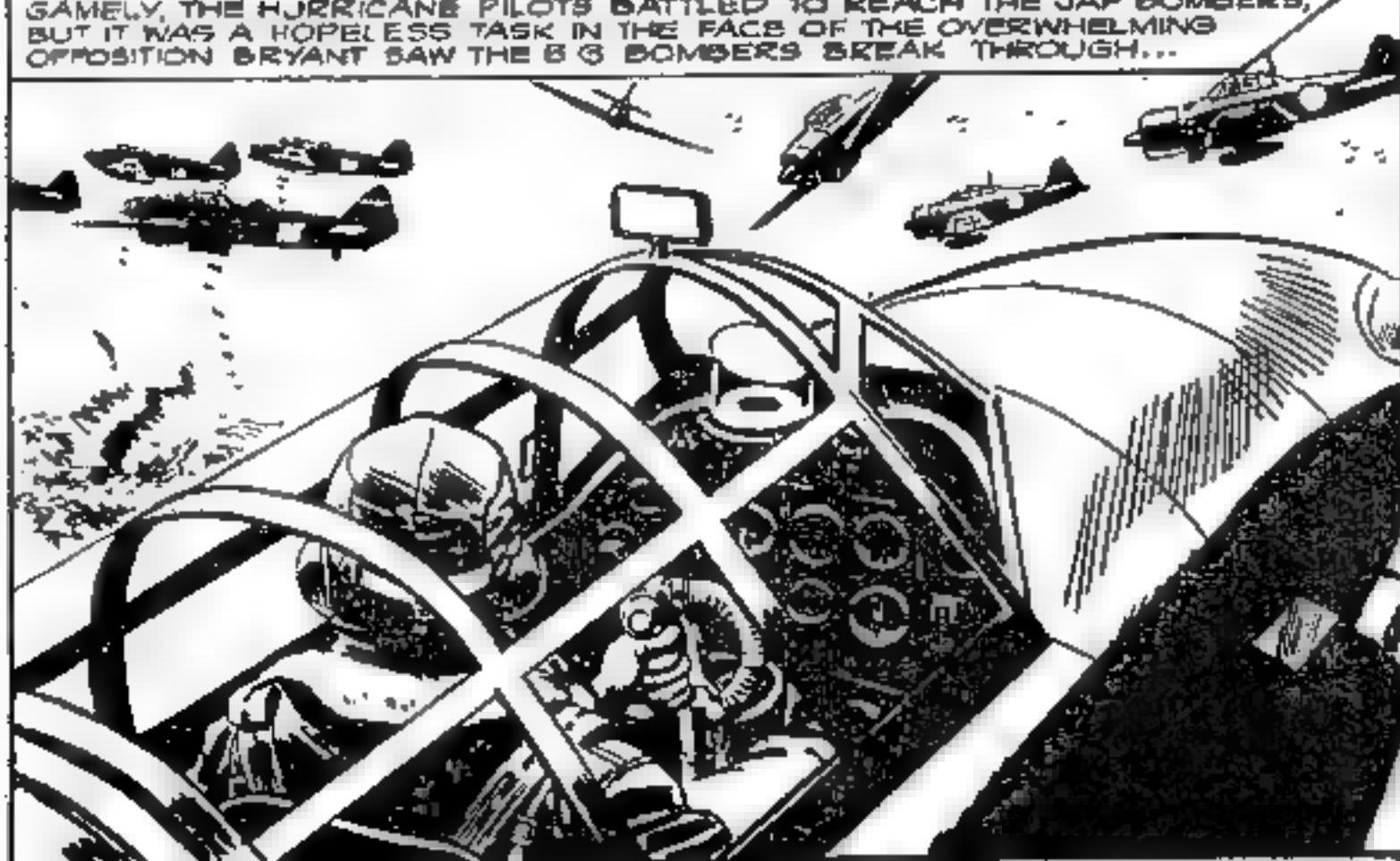


The Sky's The Limit

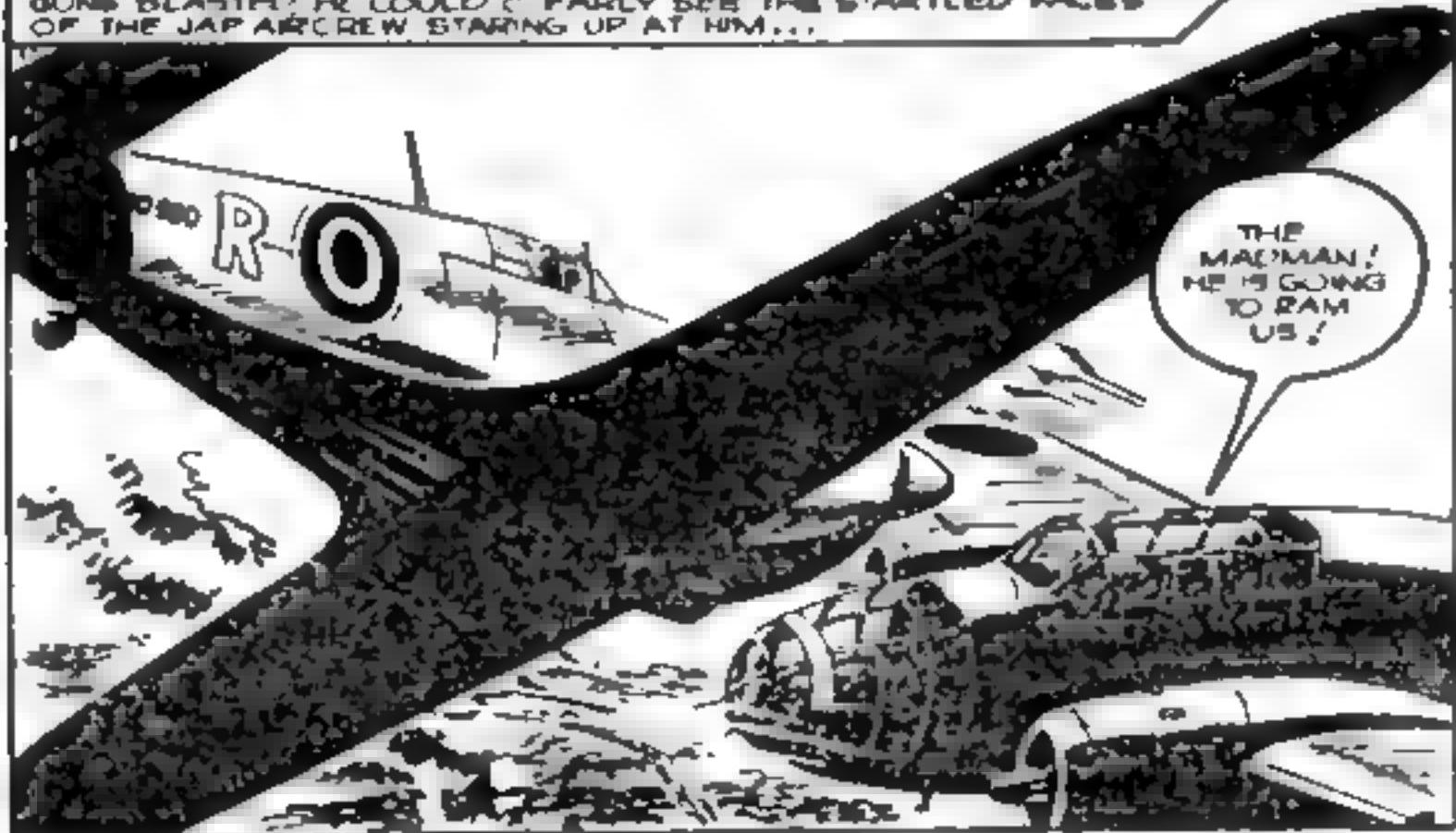
AS THE HURRICANES CLIMBED FROM THEIR TAKE OFF RUNS, THE ZEROES STRUCK ...



GAMELY, THE HURRICANE PILOTS BATTLED TO REACH THE JAP BOMBERS, BUT IT WAS A HOPELESS TASK IN THE FACE OF THE OVERWHELMING OPPosition BRYANT SAW THE B-52 BOMBERS BREAK THROUGH...



AS THE LEADING JAP BOMBER CIRCLED THE AIRFIELD BRYANT DIVED HIS MACHINE STRAIGHT AT IT IN THE SPIT-SECOND BEFORE HIS GUNS BLASTED HE COULD FAIRLY SEE THE STARTLED FACES OF THE JAP AIRCREW STARING UP AT HIM...



BRYANT'S RAKING MAUL OF BULLETS FOUND THE BOMBER'S FUEL TANKS AND THE PLANE BURST INTO FLAME BUT AS BRYANT BANKED HARD, HIS ENGINE CUT OUT!



The Sky's The Limit

HE SEARCHED DESPERATELY FOR A LANDING PLACE AWAY FROM THE GOUTING BOMB BLASTS THAT SHATTERED THE AIRSTRIP AT LAST HE FOUND A CLEAR SPOT...



THE FURY PASSED... AND THE LAST OF THE BOMBER'S DRONED AWAY AGAIN TO THE NORTH. WHAT WAS LEFT OF MINGALA BASE LAY, SHATTERED AND SMOKING, UNDER THE MOONLIGHT.



STERLING, BRYANT TURNED AWAY, THEN, TWO SHADY FIGURES CAME UP TO HIM - THE AMERICAN PILOTS, HOLT AND RAWSON.

THOSE JAPS SURE BEAT US UP, COMMANDER. ARE YOU GOING TO STAY AND FIGHT?

I'LL MAKE THAT DECISION, RAWSON!

DON'T GET HIM WRONG, SIR; RAWSON AND I ARE IN THE SAME BOAT~ WE'VE NO MONEY I LOST MINE IN THE PLANE CRASH AND RAWSON PAID HAMES TO BRING HIM IN.

LIKE I SAID BEFORE - EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES.

WHAT THIS GUY IS TRYING TO SAY, COMMANDER, IS THAT IF YOU'RE STICKING-THEN WE'RE WITH YOU...

WELL - THANK YOU! WE MAY BE VERY GLAD OF YOUR SERVICES BEFORE THIS IS OVER!

Chapter 2. Jap Attack

ANOTHER MAN WHO HAD SURVIVED THE TERRIBLE BOMBING OF MINGALA PULLED HIMSELF FROM SHELTER AS THE BOMBER FLEW OFF FOR VINCENT NAMES. THERE WAS ONLY ONE DESPERATE THOUGHT

THE JAPS
WILL BE BACK
I'VE GOT TO GET
AWAY NOW!



AMIDST THE SETTLING DUST OF THE BOMB-BLASTS, NAMES AND BRYANT CAME FACE TO FACE...

SO YOU'RE STILL ALIVE,
BRYANT?

NAMES!



YOUR ORDERS KEPT EVERYBODY HERE! BUT YOU WON'T LIVE TO COLLECT YOUR MEDALS, BRYANT!

I'M WARNING YOU, NAMES!



The Sky's The Limit

63

HAMES PENT UP FURY
CRACKED . AND HE
FLUNG HIMSELF
HEADLONG AT THE
WING COMMANDER..

CURSE
YOU, BRYANT!
YOU CAN'T
HOLD US
HERE ANY
LONGER!



THE M.O. RACED UP JUST AS A WELL-AIMED
LEFT KNOCKED HAMES SPRAWLING .

THAT'LL
QUIETEN YOU,
HAMES!

WHAT
THE HECK'S
GOT INTO THE
MAN?



58
The Sky's The Limit

RAMON SUPPLIED THE ANSWER AS HAMES LAY THERE IN THE DUST, HIS EYES FLAMING WITH HATE...

THAT MONEY'S BURNING A HOLE IN HIS POCKET, COMMANDER. HE CAN'T BEAR TO THINK OF THE JAPS TAKING IT AWAY FROM HIM.



BEFORE BRYANT HAD A CHANCE TO WORK OUT HOW TO DEAL WITH THE MAN SPRAWLED BEFORE HIM, THERE WAS ANOTHER INTERRUPTION...

WHERE DID IT COME FROM? IT CAN'T BE ONE OF OURS...



THE VEHICLE ROLLED TO A STOP AN INDIAN SERGEANT CLIMBED FROM THE DRIVING SEAT



THE SERGEANT SALUTED SMARTLY. HIS NEXT WORDS SENT THE M.D. HURRYING FOR HIS MEDICAL KIT...

I AM FROM TOUNGOO AIRFIELD, SIR. ALL FLYING AND GROUND CREWS ARE STRICKEN WITH BAD FEVER. MEDICAL HELP IS URGENTLY REQUIRED.

TOUNGOO? WE'VE GOT TO GET THERE RIGHT AWAY BRYANT!

THAT'S THE ONLY OTHER OPERATIONAL AIRFIELD IN THIS SECTOR!



SWIFTLY, BRYANT MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SURVIVORS OF THE SQUADRON TO PULL OUT AND MAKE A DASH FOR FREEDOM. THEN...

THERE IS A ROAD THROUGH THE JUNGLE I SHALL DRIVE



The Sky's The Limit

THE BATTERED OLD TRUCK WAS SOON BUMPING
THROUGH THE JUNGLE FOR THE FIRST TIME
BRYANT NOTICED HAMES HAD DISAPPEARED

I THINK HE
CLEARED OUT.
COMMANDER I
HOPE HIS LUCK
HOLDS OUT
AGAINST THE
JAPS



BUT THERE WAS NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THE MISSING MAN IN THIN THE NEXT
FEW MINUTES THEY FOUND THE JAPS WERE NEARER THAN THEY HAD IMAGINED!

WHAT'S THAT
UP AHEAD?

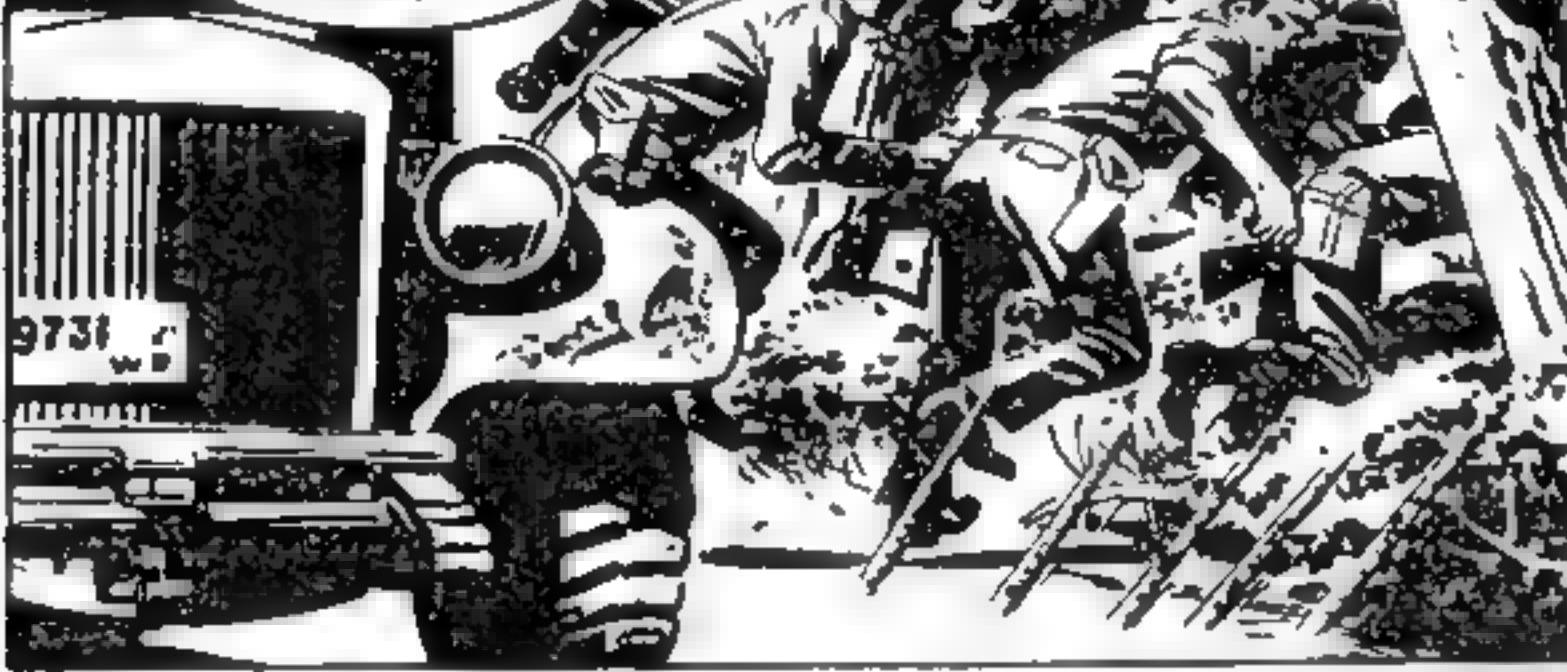
THE ROAD IS
BLOCKED SIR
PERHAPS IT
IS A TRAP!

THEN I'M
NOT EASING IT!
STOP THE TRUCK!
RIGHT MEN -
FILE OUT!



AS THEY DASHED INTO THE COVER OF THE JUNGLE, A HIDDEN MACHINE GUN OPENED UP / BULLETS STITCHED A LETHAL TRACK ALONG THE DUSTY ROAD FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE FALLEN TREE ..

WE'VE GOT TO KNOCK THAT MACHINE GUN OUT-OR WE WON'T GET THROUGH! TWO OF YOU MEN, FOLLOW ME!



THE INDIAN SERGEANT AND ONE OF THE RAF MEN JOINED BRYANT SILENTLY. THEY MOVED THROUGH THE JUNGLE COVER UNTIL THE WING-COMMANDER SPOTTED THE MACHINE-GUN NEST ..

WE'VE GOT THEM!
MAKE IT FAST.
WHEN I GIVE
THE WORD!



IT WAS THE BRAWNY INDIAN SERGEANT WHO MOVED FIRST, GRAPPLING WITH ONE OF THE JAP GUNNERS BEFORE HE HAD A CHANCE TO REACT...



DYANT AND HIS MEN TURNED TO GO BACK TO THE REST OF THE R PARTY. THERE WAS A SUDDEN MOVEMENT IN THE UNDERGROWTH AND FOUR MORE JAP INFANTRYMEN CAME STEAMING TOWARDS THEM!



The Sky's The Limit

59

AS THE INDIAN SERGEANT SWUNG THE JAP MACHINE GUN ROUND TOWARDS THE NEWCOMERS, BRYANT'S FIRE ENOUGH TO TWO OF THEM DOWN



The Sky's The Limit

THE JAPANESE MACHINE GUN JAMMED UNAVAILABLY WITH ITS MECHANISM THE INDIAN SERGEANT SPRANG TO HIS FEET CROUCHING FOR A RIFLE.

HOPE I'VE GOT ENOUGH BOUNDS LEFT TO STOP 'EM

WE SHALL DO FIGHTING, SIR!

FORWARD! FORWARD!



BRYANT'S FIRST SHOT BROUGHT DOWN ONE OF THE ENEMY BUT NEXT MOMENT THE OTHER TWO WERE UPON THEM LIKE TIGERS.



SEEING HIS CHANCE, THE TWIN COMMANDER SMASHED HIS FIST AGAINST THE JAP'S JAW. THE SNARL FROZE ON THE ENEMY'S LIPS AS HIS HEAD STRUCK A TREE WITH A SICKENING THUD.



THEN, SWINGING ROUND, BRYANT SAW THE MORTALLY WOUNDED INDIAN SERGEANT MAKE HIS FINAL KILL ...



The Sky's The Limit

47
THERE WAS NOTHING SEVANT COULD DO
BUT THE GALLANT SEVANT CREEPING
THROUGH THE JUNGLE HE JOINED THE OTHERS.

THE JAPS HAVE
CONTROL OF THE
ROAD. WE'LL
HAVE TO MOVE
ON IN THE
JUNGLE.

I'VE GOT
A COMPASS
IN MY PACK
THAT SHOULD
SEE US
THROUGH.

WITH THE MO CARRYING HIS HEFTY
MEDICAL PACK THEY SET OUT
SEVANT KNEW THEIR CHANCES OF
REACHING TUNKIO ARFIELD
WERE SLIM BUT THERE WAS NO
GOING BACK TO MANGALA.



AS THE WEARY PARTY TRUDGED ON THE ENEMY
TROOPS WERE ALREADY STREAMING SOUTH
AFTER THEIR BREAKTHROUGH AT KUMMING. THE
FINAL OVERTHROW OF DULEA WAS AT HAND.



The Sky's The Limit

43

AS DUSK CAME TO THE JUNGLE AGAIN,
WING COMMANDER BRYANT WAS CLOSER TO
TOUNGOO AIRFIELD THAN HE THOUGHT.

ANOTHER
PATROL... AND
WE'RE TOO DEAD
BEAT TO MOVE.
WE'LL HAVE TO
SHOOT IT OUT!



BUT THE MAN WHO CAME THROUGH THE
SCREEN OF BUSHES WAS NO JAP.
SEEING HIM BRYANT STOOD UP SUDDENLY.

IT'S AN INDIAN
SOLDIER! OVER
HERE, MAN!



THE INDIAN HAD BEEN SENT OUT FROM
THE AIRFIELD TO FIND THEM. QUICKLY,
HE LED THEM ALONG A JUNGLE TRAIL.

LUCKY WE
SPOTTED YOU
FIRST. THE
JAPS ARE
EVERYWHERE!

MANY JAPS...
BUT I HAVE
BEEN SEARCHING
FOR YOU. WE
SUSPECTED THE
TRUCK HAD
BEEN WAYLAI.



The Sky's The Limit

IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, THE PARTY REACHED THE HIDDEN AIRFIELD. SWIFTLY, THE M.O. GOT TO WORK.



THE COMMANDING OFFICER WAS A BURLY SOUTH AFRICAN STRAIGHTWAY, HE SHOWED BRYANT WHAT WAS ON HIS MIND, AS HE SPOKE IN HIS FEVER-WEAKEFENED VOICE

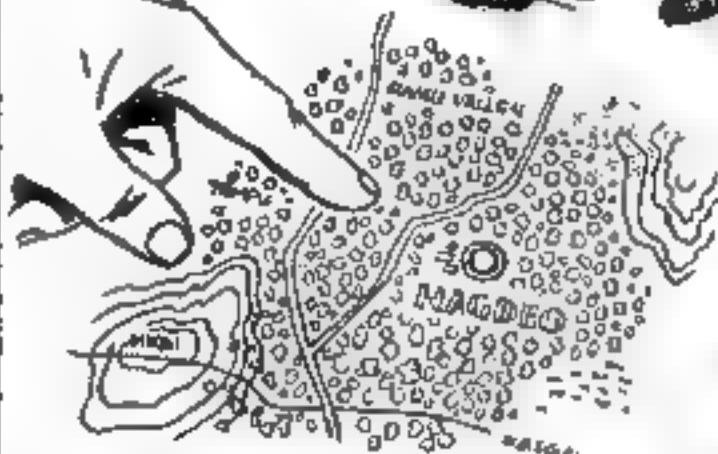
THIS FEVER WOULD STRIKE US JUST WHEN WE HAD A CRITICAL ENEMY TARGET PIN-POINTED, BRYANT...

ANYTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT?



THE SOUTH AFRICAN'S FINGER TAPPED THE CHART ON THE FLOOR BESIDE HIM URGENTLY. HIS VOICE WAS STERN...

THERE'S SOMETHING YOU MUST DO, BRYANT! ONE OF OUR PILOTS SPOTTED ENEMY CONCENTRATIONS AROUND MAGDEO... ENOUGH JAP AMMUNITION TO BLOW BURMA INTO THE SEA.



YOU WANT US TO RAID IT? OKAY!

BRYANT LISTENED AS THE SICK MAN OUTLINED A PLAN OF ATTACK...

THERE SEEMS TO BE NO FIGHTER COVER NEAR MAGDEO. ONE BLENHEIM COULD GET THROUGH THEIR FLAK DEFENCES. AT NIGHT, IF THE TARGET COULD BE PINPOINTED.

I COULD FLY ONE OF THE LYSANDERS AS PATHFINDER

WHEN HE FINALLY LEFT THE C.O.'S TENT BRYANT'S MIND WAS MADE UP. HE HAD A TASK AHEAD - TO PERSUADE TWO MORE MEN TO COME WITH HIM.

I THINK I CAN RAISE A CREW FOR THE BLENHEIM...

YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST, BRYANT. WE EXPECT THE JAPS AT ANY TIME.



46

The Sky's The Limit

ONCE OUTSIDE BRYANT BOUGHT OUT HOLT AND RAWSON HE QUICKLY EXPLAINED WHAT HE WANTED.

YOU TOLD ME YOU'D HELP ME IF YOU COULD...

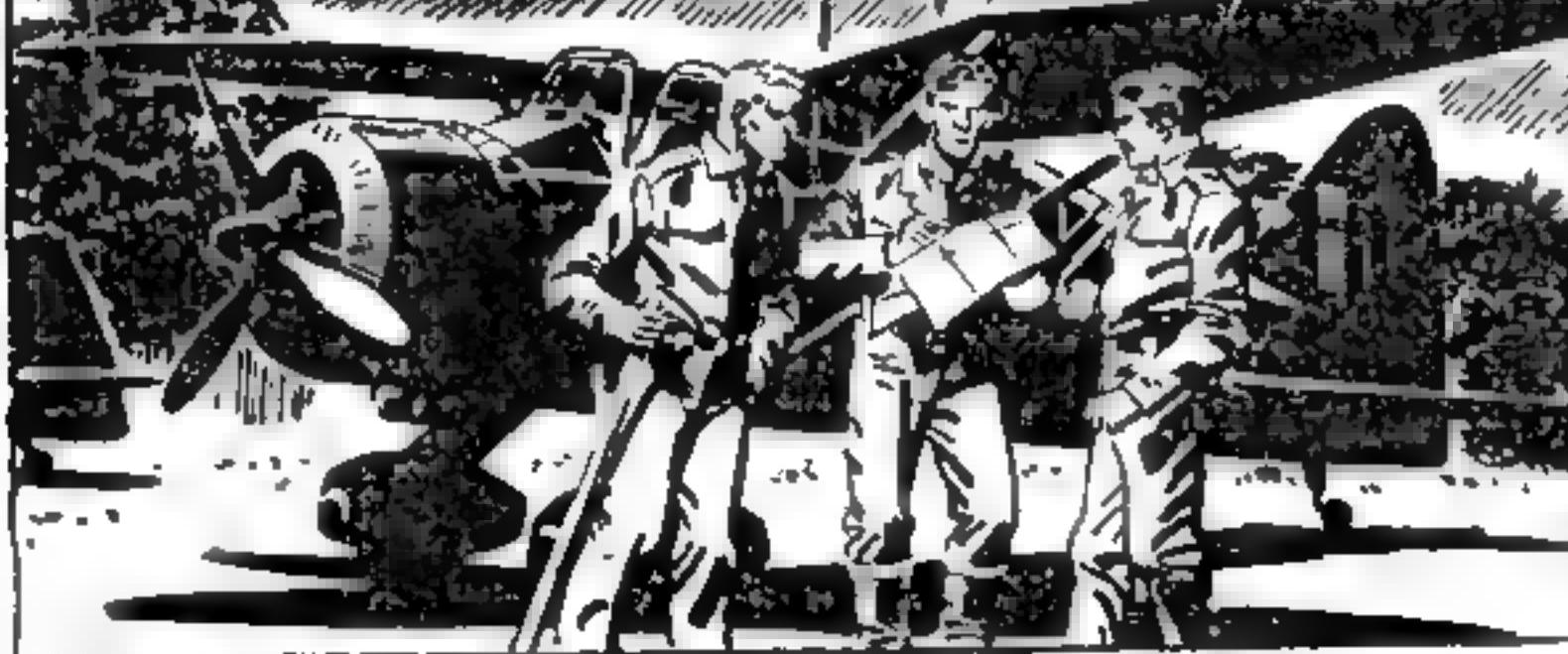
SURE THING! HANK AND MYSELF WERE LOOKING OVER THESE BABIES I RECKON WE COULD HANDLE ONE.



ONE OF THE BLENHEIMS WAS ALREADY BOMBED UP. IT ONLY REMAINED FOR BRYANT TO TAKE OVER THE LYSAENDER HE WOULD FLY IN AS PATHFINDER.

THE CHANCES ARE THE JAPS WILL HAVE PLENTY OF FLAK COVER NEAR THE TARGET BUT IF I GET IN FIRST AND GIVE YOU A GOOD PINPOINT.

IT'LL BE A CINCH! ONE HIT ON THAT AMMO DUMP WILL DO THE TRICK!



THE MEDICAL OFFICER CAME TO SEE BRYANT OFF...

GOOD LUCK, BIR! I'LL BE STOPPING HERE TO TAKE CARE OF THOSE WITH FEVER.

MAYBE YOU'LL NEED AS MUCH LUCK AS I WILL, DOC!



AND SO TWO BRAVE MEN PARTED - FOR THE LAST TIME BRYANT GUNNED THE MOTOR OF THE LYSANDER.

BRYANT ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE HAUNTED BY SOMETHING IN HIS PAST. I HOPE HE FINDS THE ANSWER TO IT OUT THERE.



Chapter 3. The Price of Honour

AIRBORNE BRYANT TURNED THE OLD LYMANDE ON COURSE

I'M GOING TO NEED
MY NIGHT FIGHTER
EYESIGHT TONIGHT
IF WE'RE TO PULL
THIS OFF!



THE PLANES DROVED ON - OVER THE DARK
JUNGLE ON THEIR MISSION OF DESTRUCTION
THEN BRYANT'S SHARP EYES SPOTTED
SOMETHING FAR BELOW...

LIGHTS!
MUST BE TRUCKS
MOVING ALONG A
ROAD - AND I
BETTER I CAN
GUESS WHERE
THEY ARE
HEADED



The Sky's The Limit

SUDDENLY HIS PLANE WAS BATHED IN DAZZLING LIGHT A JAP ANTI-AIRCRAFT BATTERY HAD PICKED HIM UP.

ENEMY PLANE OPEN FIRE!



THE SLOW MOVING LYSANDER WAS CAUGHT IN A BOX BARRAGE / BRYANT STRUGGLED TO HOLD THE BUFFETED PLANE ON COURSE

I'VE GOT TO CLIMB - GET ABOVE THE BARRAGE!



The Sky's The Limit

EVEN AS HE FOUGHT FOR HEIGHT, ANOTHER SEARCHLIGHT PLICKED ON ITS ROVING BEAM FASTENED ON TO THE TINY PLANE . . .

THE NIPS HAVE FIXED HIM IN THAT SEARCHLIGHT, RAWSON! HE DOESN'T HAVE A CHANCE!

HE DOES
YOU CAN WORK
THE FRONT GUNS,
HOLT! I'M GOING
THROUGH THAT
CRAZY LIGHT!

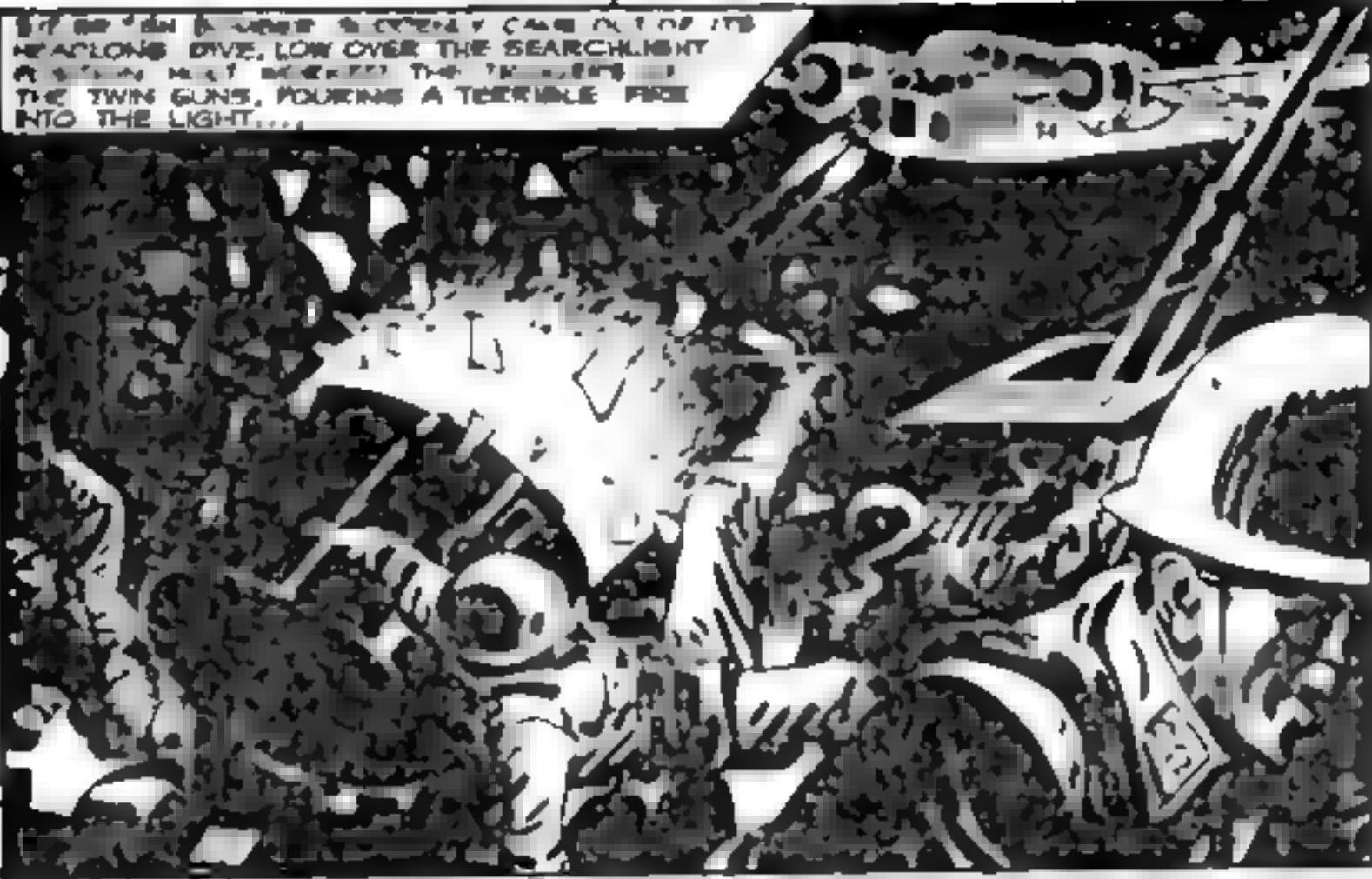
AS RAWSON PUT THE BLENHEM INTO A STEEP DIVE,
STRAIGHT FOR THE SEARCHLIGHT BATTERY, HOLT
HAD ALREADY SCRAMBLED INTO THE GUN TURRET.

STAY WITH
IT, HOLT! I'M
GOING TO
PULL OUT!

The Sky's The Limit

31

"THE FRENCH JET WENT SECRETLY CAME OUT OF ITS
HEADLONG DIVE, LOW OVER THE SEARCHLIGHT
AS IT HAD BEEN HIT BY ONE OF THE TWO GUNS.
THE TWIN GUNS, POURING A TERRIBLE FIRE
INTO THE LIGHT..."



"IN THE LYANOW RETANT STARBU IN THE TIME
THE RAAF WAS SWIMMED NOW TO THE PLANE,
AS HIS OWN PLANE DROPPED ON

I ONCE
ATTURED HOLT
AND RANTA IN
EARNING OF 120
MONTE IN THE
STORY OF THEIR LIVES
TO DATE
MINE



The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT REALISED THAT THEY WERE ALMOST OVER THE TARGET AREA AS THE FLAK GREW STEADILY MORE INTENSE.



ACTING ON THE INSTINCT BORNE OF HIS NIGHT FIGHTER DAYS BRYANT KNEW THIS MUST BE THE TARGET BELOW HIM. NEXT INSTANT THE FLARES WERE GONE!



NEXT SECOND, THE BLENHEIM ROARED IN AND DROPPED ITS BOMB-LOAD. WITH AN EXPLOSION WHICH SHOOK THE EARTH FOR MILES AROUND, THE AMMUNITION DUMP BLEW UP!



BUFFETED BY THE BLAST OF THE TITANIC EXPLOSION, THE TWO AIRCRAFT FOUND IT A STRUGGLE TO KEEP ON AN EVEN KEEL ...

BANG ON TARGET, HOLT! LOOK AT THAT FIRE ~ IT'S BIG ENOUGH TO BE SEEN CLEAR TO TOKYO!

THANKS TO OUR PATHFINDER!

NOW WE'VE GOT TO GET AWAY BEFORE THE HORNETS ARRIVE...



54 The Sky's The Limit

BUT RETALIATION CAME SOONER THAN THEY HAD EXPECTED ...

WE'VE GOT COMPANY~
A BUNCH OF ZEROS,
RAWSON!

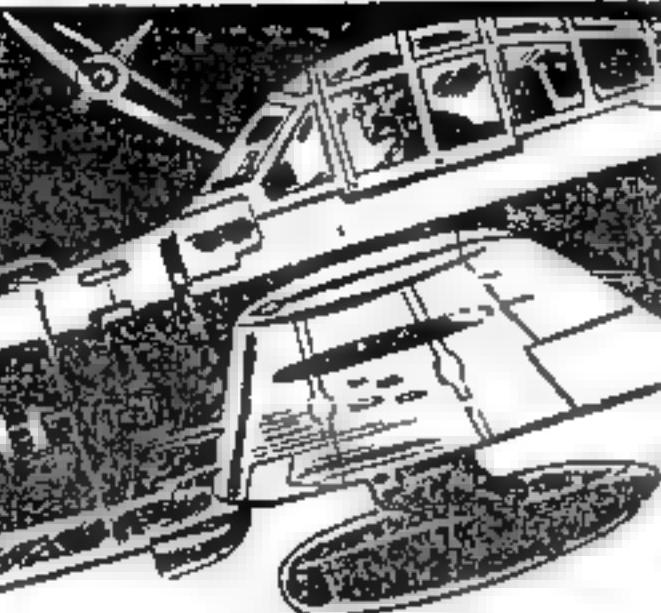
GET IN
THE TURRET,
HOLT / HIT
THEM WITH
ALL YOU'VE
GOT!

THE JAP FIGHTERS CLOSED ON THE LUMBERING
BRITISH PLANES... THERE WAS A SPLUTTER OF
FLAME FROM THE BLENHEIM'S PORT ENGINE .

WE'RE
HIT!

AS THE STRICKEN BOMBER WENT INTO A DEATH DIVE, THE JAP FIGHTERS TURNED IN A WIDE ARC ONE OF THEM PEELED OFF AND SPED TOWARDS THE SURVIVING BRITISH PLANE . . .

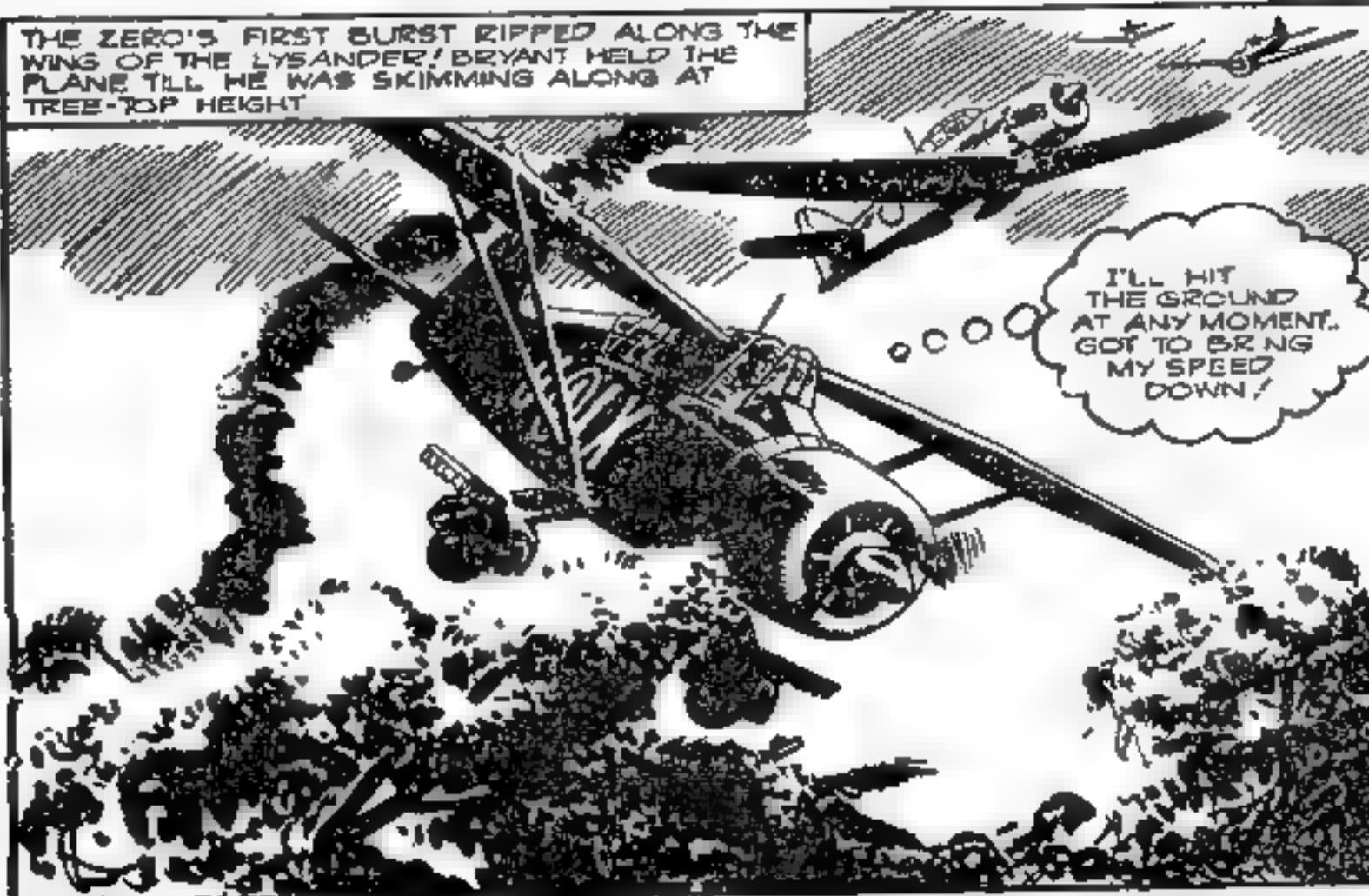
A SPOTTER PLANE! IT WILL BE A PERFECT TARGET FOR MY GUNS!



IF I CAN DODGE THE FIRST BURST I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CRASH LAND!

THE ZERO'S FIRST BURST RIPPED ALONG THE WING OF THE LYSAENDER! BRYANT HELD THE PLANE TILL HE WAS SKIMMING ALONG AT TREE-TOP HEIGHT

I'LL HIT THE GROUND AT ANY MOMENT. GOT TO BRNG MY SPEED DOWN!



The Sky's The Limit

BUT AS GRYANT THROTTLED BACK, THE TERRIFIC DRAG ON THE SHATTERED WINGS CAUSED THEM TO BREAK UP

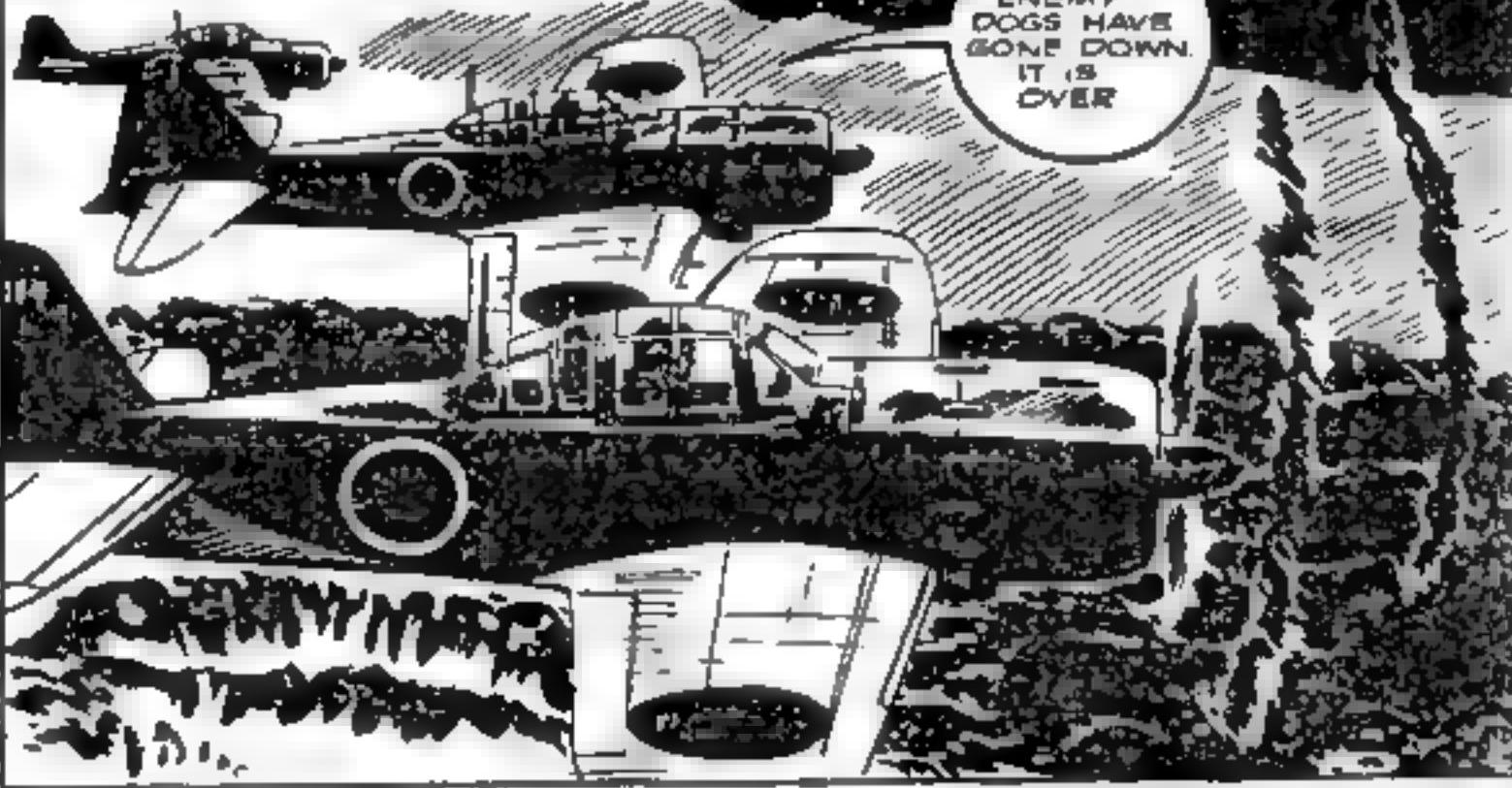


SHE'S
CRACKING UP!
I CAN'T HOLD
HER! I CAN'T
CONTROL
HER...

UOLX

OVER THE JUNGLE THERE WAS STILLNESS ONCE AGAIN, EXCEPT FOR THE CLIMBING SPIRALS OF BLACK SMOKE THAT MARKED THE SPOTS WHERE THE TWO PLANES HAD CRASHED.

BOTH ENEMY DOGS HAVE GONE DOWN. IT IS OVER



BUT, DEEP IN THE JUNGLE, A MAN WAS CRAWLING FREE FROM THE WRECK OF A LYANDER

WHAT HAPPENED?
THE PLANE GOT TO GET FREE



The Sky's The Limit

GRADUALLY BRYANT'S BEAN CLEARED. HE MAILED HIMSELF UPRIGHT AND STARTED TO REMEMBER AS HE GAZED BACK AT THE SMOKING WRECK OF THE LYSANDER.

THE PLANE.
THOSE FIGHTERS.
I REMEMBER
THE FIRE.

HOLT AND
RANSON
THEY'RE DEAD!
THEY DIED, LIKE
JOHNNY LEWIS
DIED, LIKE YOU
ALMOST DIED

THE IMAGINATION OF THE SHOCKED MAN WAS PLAYING TRICKS ON HIM! HE TURNED WHOLLY BLINDLY INTO THE JUNGLE AS VOICES SEEMED TO CALL OUT TO HIM FROM THE UNDERGROWTH.

THOSE VOICES!
I CAN'T STAND IT!

LEWISON DEAD
HOLT DEAD, LIKE
JOHNNY DIED
AND LIKE YOU'RE
GOING TO DIE,
BRYANT!

THEN, OUT CLEARLY, HE
SAW A MAN'S FACE!

IT'S NAMES!
NO! NO - IT
CAN'T BE!



MERCIFULLY, BRYANT BLACKED OUT.
THEN, THROUGH THE GROPPING MISTS,
HE GRADUALLY CAME ROUND.

TAKE IT
EASY BRYANT.
YOU'VE HAD A
NASTY BANG
ON THE
HEAD

NAMES!
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?



The Sky's The Limit

HAMES EXPLAINED WHAT HAD BROUGHT
HIM TO THE JUNGLE

I WAS HEADING FOR
RANGOON BUT GOT
LOST IN THE JUNGLE.
I SAW THE EXPLOSION
OF THE AMMO DUMP
WHEN YOU DROPPED
THOSE BOMBS.

WHAT
MADE YOU
STOP
HAMES?



HAMES SPOKE TENSELY,
DETERMINED THAT BRYANT
SHOULD BELIEVE HIM

I BEGAN TO THINK
ABOUT THINGS, BRYANT!
HOW MEN WERE
DYING WHILE I WAS
RUNNING TO SAVE
MY OWN SKIN,
AND THE MONEY
I HAD.





HAMES TURNED AWAY AS HE WENT ON HIS VOICE BECAME BITTER

YOU'RE CERTAIN YOU CAUSED JOHNNY LEVIS TO DIE BY YOUR MISTAKE IN THAT NEW FIGHTER BRYANT MAYBE YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW THAT I MADE A MISTAKE JUST LIKE IT ONCE

VOO'



The Sky's The Limit

BRYANT LISTENED IN SILENCE

THAT NEW JAGUAR FIGHTER
WAS A KILLER, BRYANT! I
SHOULD KNOW. I WAS THE
FIRST TEST PILOT TO FLY IT.
MY PLANE CRASHED AND
MY CO-PILOT WAS KILLED. I
WAS BLAMED AND CASHHEERED
FOR NEGLIGENCE. BUT IT
WAS THE OIL PRESSURE
FEED THAT WAS
FAULTY.

OIL
PRESSURE
FEED? THAT
WAS HOW IT
HAPPENED?
WITH ME - AND
JOHNNY!

HAMES WENT INTO GREATER DETAIL. BUT FOR
BRYANT THE QUESTIONS WERE ALREADY
ANSWERED. THE MACHINE NOT THE MEN HAD FAILED!

YOU DIDN'T KILL
JOHNNY LEVIS HIS
MURKILLER WAS A
BRUTAL FIGHTER
PLANE THAT SHOULD
NEVER HAVE BEEN
FLOWN!

AND YOU
SHOULD NEVER
HAVE BEEN
CASHHEERED
HAMES

The Sky's The Limit

63

VINCENT HAMES PULLED THE MONEY FROM HIS POCKETS... THE DOLLARS HE HAD BEEN PAID AS A FLYING TIGER PILOT...

YOU KNOW, HONOUR IS A STRANGE WORD, BRYANT. SOUNDS A LITTLE OUTDATED NOWADAYS. BUT PERHAPS I'M BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND IT A LITTLE BETTER. I SHAN'T NEED THESE DOLLARS TO BUY IT, ANYWAY...



THE DAWN WAS RISING —
AND WITH THE DAWN
CAME THE JAP PATROLS...

BANZAI!
WHITE DOGS!
ATTACK!



TOGETHER, THEY FACED THE ENEMY ~ THE TWO MEN WHO FOR SO LONG HAD BEEN FIGHTING THE BATTLES THAT RAGED WITHIN THEMSELVES. THEY WERE OUTNUMBERED, BUT THEY HAD A FIGHTING CHANCE... AND AS HAMES HAD SAID, HONOUR WAS A WORD THAT ONCE AGAIN MEANT SOMETHING TO HIM...

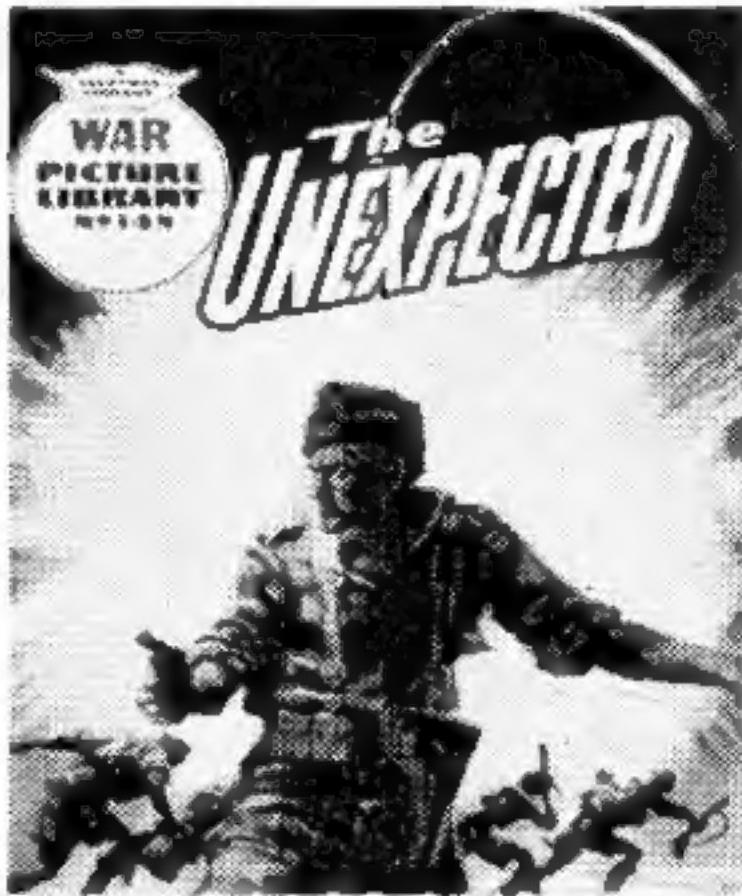


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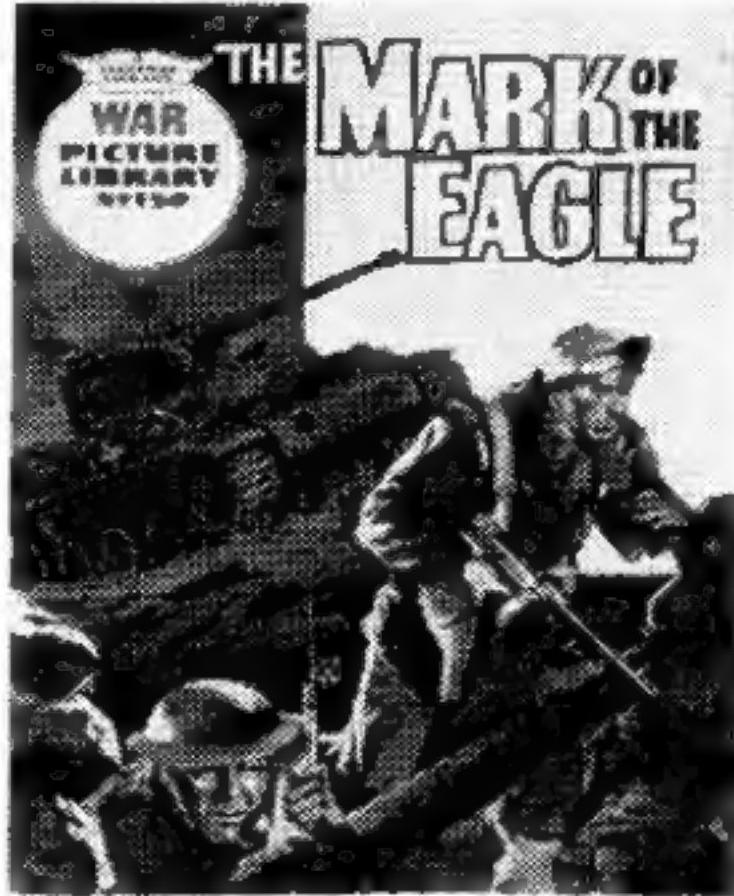
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